MARVEL GROUP

THE HUMAN TORCH

NO. 26

COMICS 10¢ K

IN THIS ISSUE

"HER DIARY OF TERROR!"

A·FULL·LENGTH·ACTION·THRILLER

DIARY

Today Toro met his doom! He was ...ured.

AMAZING BARGAINS

Rings

Ladies' & Men's Engagement, Wedding, Friendship Rings

YOUR CHOICE $1.94

17. Men's Ring with 2 sparkling simulated diamonds and ruby in center. Yellow gold color mounting.

69. Men's Ring—sparkling center stone. White gold color effect.

26. Men's Ring with large simulated Ruby, also in assorted colored stones. Yellow or white gold color effect.

75. Men's Ring—sparkling replica diamond. White or yellow gold color effect. (1 lt. size stone.)

68. Men's Ring—flashing, extra large, replica diamond. White or yellow gold color effect.

66. Men's Ring—flashing replica diamond—smaller stone on each side. White or yellow gold color effect.

73. Ladies' Cameo Ring. Yellow gold color effect.

44. Men's Wedding Ring. Yellow or white gold color effect, or sterling silver.

39. Ladies' Solitaire Ring. 3 sparkling simulated diamonds. White gold color effect.

53. Egyptian Ring—unusual design. Very odd.

64. Men's simulated large square cut ruby. Yellow gold color effect.

74. Men's Ring—brilliant replica diamond. Yellow gold color effect. Fancy setting.

61. Ladies' Engagement Ring with 5 large brilliant simulated diamonds. Yellow gold color effect.

23. Ladies' Engagement Ring, an exceptionally brilliant simulated diamond. Tiffany Style setting. White or yellow gold color effect.

33. Large Ladies' Ring. Simulated diamond—2 smaller sized stones. Yellow or white gold color effect.

58. Indian Head Ring. Head is stamped in gold leaf.

28. Ladies' Engagement ring with 5 brilliant simulated diamonds. Yellow gold color effect.

57. Hand Carved Corozo Nut Ring—Indian Head.

78. Men's Ring—fine replica diamond. Yellow gold color effect.

10. Child's Signet Ring. Yellow or white gold color effect.

7. Love & Friendship Ring. Solid sterling silver with 2 hearts linked. Forget-me-not design.

60. Ladies' Engagement Ring set with large center simulated diamond and small stones on sides. Yellow gold color effect.

18. Ladies' Birthstone Ring. White or yellow gold color effect or sterling silver. Give month of birth for proper stone color.

67. Men's Ring—large brilliant replica, white diamond. White gold color effect.

12. Men's Ring with simulated diamond in square mounting. Yellow or white gold color effect.

35. Men's Signet Ring. White gold color effect or sterling silver.

43. Ladies' Wedding Band. 7 large brilliant simulated diamonds. White or yellow gold color effect or sterling silver

4. Friendship Ring solid sterling silver. Smart popular Sweetheart design.

19. Ladies' Solitaire Engagement ring. Filigree mounting white gold color effect or sterling silver.

25. Ladies' Plain Wedding Band. Yellow or white gold color effect, or sterling silver.

38. Ladies' Birthstone Ring—stones come in all colors. Sterling silver mounting (stamped in ring). State color stone desired.

31. Ladies' Solitaire Ring. Center stone is genuine diamond chip. Solid sterling silver mounting.

24. Love & Friendship Ring. Solid sterling silver. Beautifully engraved. Also used as Wedding ring.

37. Love & Friendship Ring. Chased design also used as wedding ring. Yellow or white gold effect, or sterling silver.

5. Men's Ring with single sparkling simulated diamond. Yellow gold color effect.

11. Wedding Ring. Raised floral design. White gold or yellow color effect, or sterling silver.

71. Ladies' Engagement ring. White gold color effect. Tiffany setting. Large single stone.

76. Ladies' Ring. Yellow gold color effect. Fancy Design. Large single stone.

58. Wedding Ring—beautifully chased. Yellow or white gold color effect or solid sterling silver.

48. Wedding Band with sparkling simulated diamonds. White or yellow gold color effect or sterling silver.

41. Ladies' Solitaire Ring with large center simulated diamond and 6 smaller stones. Yellow or white gold color effect

45. Corozo Nut Ring. Hand Carved. Set with simulated pearl. (Comes in various designs.)

77. Ladies' Engagement Ring. Replica diamond with smaller stone on each side. White gold color effect.

72. Men's Large Cameo Ring—black & white or brown & white stone. White gold color effect, or sterling silver.

22. Ladies' Solitaire engagement ring. Extra large, brilliant simulated diamond. Yellow or white gold color effect.

65. Extra Large Dinner Ring—yellow gold plate over sterling silver. Stone comes in all colors.

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FROM OUT OF YELLOWED PAGES OF THE PAST ECHOES A WOMAN'S EERIE VOW FOR REVENGE! AND A STRANGE MAN OF EVIL ANSWERS THAT DEADLY COMMAND! THAT POWERHOUSE PAIR, **TORCH** AND **TORO** FEARLESSLY SEEKS AN ANSWER TOO--AGAINST GRUESOME ODDS--AS THEY PIT THEIR RESOURCES OF KEEN WIT AND FIERY MUSCLES INTO THE TANGLE OF STRANGE MYSTERY IN THE CASE OF ...

"Her DIARY of TERROR!"

A STRANGE PHONE CALL REACHES TORCH AT HOME...

THIS IS ROBERT NEWELL. I MUST SEE YOU AT ONCE.

MOMENTS LATER:...

I SAID WE'D DROP OVER. IT'S ON THE WAY TO OUR DATE AT HEADQUARTERS TO WATCH THE BALLISTICS TEST. NEWELL SAYS IT'S ABOUT THE ACTRESS HELEN HALE WHO DIED RECENTLY.

I REMEMBER READING THE ITEM.

SHE WAS ONCE A GREAT STAR UNDER J.B. NORRIS. BUT SHE DIED IN OBSCURITY. THE NEWELLS WERE AT HER DEATH-BED.

THAT'S WHAT THEY WANT TO TELL US ABOUT!

AT THE NEWELL'S:...

YOU'RE RATHER YOUNG PEOPLE AND NEWLY MARRIED. HOW IS THE BROKERAGE BUSINESS?

GOOD! YES, WE'VE BEEN MARRIED 6 MONTHS. HOW DID YOU KNOW?

A PROFUSION OF ORNAMENTS—OBVIOUSLY WEDDING GIFTS. I LOOKED UP YOUR OCCUPATION IN THE DIRECTORY, NEWELL. LET'S HAVE YOUR STORY.

WE MET HELEN HALE A COUPLE MONTHS AGO. SHE LIVED IN A ROOMING HOUSE NEARBY. SHE WAS A PITIFUL SIGHT. WE TRIED TO HELP HER. THEN ONE DAY...

"SHE HAD A BAD STROKE--AND IN HER SHABBY ROOM..."

I KNOW I'M DYING..DOCTOR, LET ME SPEAK TO THIS COUPLE ..ALONE..PLEASE..

VERY WELL

"WE WERE ALONE...HER BONY HANDS BEGAN SEARCHING THE BED..."

THIS IS MY DIARY..PUT IT...LOCKED..INTO YOUR.. DESK...IT'S..MY REVENGE... ONCE..I WAS RICH..FAMOUS.. MY ENEMIES..CAUSED..MY DOWNFALL...

MY SON.. EDWARD..WENT FAR AWAY..BUT..HE'LL RETURN..TO AVENGE.. MY DOWNFALL..GASP... HERE..IS..HIS..PICTURE.. ...GASP..

"FROM UNDER THE PILLOW, SHE WRENCHED A FADED PHOTOGRAPH..."

EDWARD..GASP..WILL.. AVENGE..ME..GASP..

"A MINUTE LATER SHE WAS DEAD WE PUT HER DIARY INTO OUR DESK AND FORGOT IT UNTIL LAST NIGHT..."

BOB! WAKE UP! SOMEONE'S IN THE LIBRARY!

"..WE CREPT INTO THE LIBRARY..."

WHO'S THERE?

..."THE PROWLER WHIRLED AROUND AND..."

GET OUT OF HERE!

"THEN HE FLED INTO THE NIGHT!"

THE DIARY IS GONE!

BOB, THAT MAN LOOKED LIKE THE PHOTO--- BUT OLDER! HER SON EDWARD CAME BACK!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

SOUNDS LIKE HELEN HALE WAS IN COMMUNICATION WITH HER SON BEFORE SHE DIED. ANY IDEA WHAT'S IN THE DIARY?

JUST A RECORD OF HER LIFE!

WE'LL HOPE NOTHING COMES OF THIS...TORCH, WE MUST LEAVE FOR HEAD-QUARTERS.

TORCH, DO YOU REALLY THINK NOTHING WILL HAPPEN?

NO LAD, IT TROUBLES ME...THAT CAR IS GOING TO CRASH! QUICK!

THE TWIN FLAME BOLTS ROCKET TO THE CRASHING CAR!

ONE OCCUPANT--THE DRIVER...AND HE'S DEAD ALREADY! SKULL CRUSHED IN!

YES THE ACCIDENT VICTIM IS VERY MUCH DEAD

HIS CARDS IDENTIFY HIM AS GEORGE P. GRIMES.

TORCH! LOOK WHAT I FOUND IN THE CAR!

A PAGE--OF DEATH!

JAN. 10TH 1920

Diary of Helen Hale

I've been in a horrible accident! My beauty is gone. I told George Grimes to be careful. He drove like mad. He's to blame for this tragedy. I'm never going to ride with him again!

A PAGE TORN FROM HER DIARY--AND MEANT TO BE FOUND! THIS IS NO ACCIDENT! IT'S MURDER!

AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

WE INVESTIGATED. THE STEERING WHEEL HAD BEEN LOOSENED!

A LOOSE NUT! BOYS, PICK UP EDWARD HALE!

CHIEF! LOOK AT THIS! IT WAS LEFT OUTSIDE THE DOOR!

THE CHIEF OPENS THE NEW NOTE.

TWO MORE WILL DIE TODAY - BY KNIFE - BY POISON - TO PAY FOR DESTROYING MY MOTHER'S HAPPINESS

Helen Hale

THE MAD MAN! ANY TRAIL OF THIS NOTE?

NO, IT'S ORDINARY DIME STORE PAPER.. CAN'T TRACE IT!

TWO MORE ARE SCHEDULED TO DIE! IF WE ONLY KNEW WHO WERE CONNECTED WITH HELEN HALE'S PAST..COME ON, LAD!

WHERE TO? GOSH, HOW ABOUT J. B. NORRIS, THEATRICAL PRODUCER? HELEN HALE WAS STARRED IN HIS PRODUCTIONS.

EXACTLY WE'RE HEADED TO BROADWAY-- TO LOCATE HIM!

AFTER INQUIRES AMONG THEATRICAL FOLK

WELL, THEY SAY NORRIS RETIRED 5 YEARS AGO AND LIVES ALONE ON LONG ISLAND. LET'S GO!

BUT EVEN IF WE GET THE STORIES FROM HIM OF PEOPLE IN HER PAST--

--THAT STILL WON'T TELL US WHOM EDWARD HAS MARKED NEXT FOR DEATH!

I HAVE A HUNCH IT **MIGHT**, LAD. WE SHOULD BE AT NORRIS' IN A VERY FEW MINUTES.

BUT ALREADY THE DIABOLICAL DEALER OF DEATH IS STEALTHILY AT WORK!

YOU'RE FINISHED, NORRIS!

A FEW MOMENTS LATER--

ONE MORE GONE-- AND NO ONE'S THE WISER! I LEFT MY LITTLE SOUVENIR...

SHORT MINUTES LATER, WHEN TORCH AND TORO ARRIVE---!

"FEB., 1921...J. B. NORRIS STABBED ME IN THE BACK! ALTHO MY APPEARANCE HAS IMPROVED AND HE PROMISED TO PUT ME IN A PLAY, HE CANCELLED MY CONTRACT! I PRAY FOR REVENGE!"

WITH NORRIS DEAD, THERE GOES OUR PIPELINE!

UNLESS HE LEFT A RECORD OF DEALINGS WITH HELEN HALE.

WHAT IS IT, TORCH? FIND SOMETHING?

YES... A LETTER ON THE FLOOR BEHIND THE DESK...

THE LETTER...

REAL ESTATE
1618 EIGHTH ST.

Dear J.B.

I read about H.H's death...I always was a friend of hers when I was a theatre press agent so nothings on my conscience. But what about yours--and those you turned against her?

John Madden

NO TIME TO LOSE! WE'LL VISIT MAKIN! NORRIS' MURDER MAKES MY HUNCH ABOUT THE MURDER PATTERN A THEORY!

AS THE TORRID-TEAM COMETS STREAK ACROSS MANHATTAN...

GRIMES' OFFENSE AGAINST HELEN HALE WAS AN ACCIDENT. HE WAS KILLED IN AN ACCIDENT! NORRIS STABBED HER IN THE BACK!--AND DIED THAT WAY... THE NEXT IS POISON!

NOW TO FIND WHOM SHE DESCRIBES AS POISON!

AT MAKIN'S OFFICE...

POISON? **ALL** WERE POISON TO HELEN HALE. DOZENS OF 'EM TURNED THEIR BACKS ON HER WHEN HER STAR FELL.

BUT IS THERE ANYONE IN PARTICULAR--

...WHOM SHE ACTUALLY CALLED POISON?

SAY! YES! LIL LABONG, OWNER OF THE SWANK-SWANK NIGHT CLUB. SHE INFLUENCED NORRIS AGAINST HELEN HALE WHO **DID** CALL HER POISON!

YOU'LL FIND LIL LABONG HOME AT 2 CREST ROAD, LARCH-MONT, LONG ISLAND. SHE'S USUALLY THERE ALL DAY.

LET'S GO, TORO!

AT THE NIGHT CLUB OWNER'S HOME--

WHAT A SOFT LIFE SOME PEOPLE LEAD. BREAKFAST IN BED! I'LL GET THE SUGAR...

THIS STUFF WILL KILL INSTANTLY...

AND I MAKE A QUICK GETAWAY! **OH!** THE TORCH!

THIS WILL SLOW THEM UP!

WE BURNED OUT OF THAT! WHERE'S EDWARD?

I'LL LOOK FOR HIM! GO INTO THE HOUSE, LAD AND STOP LIL LABONG FROM EATING!

SWIFTLY TORCH SPOTS THE FUGITIVE KILLER!

JOURNEY'S END KILLER!

BUT AS TORCH BEGINS TO FLAME-RING THE FLEEING MURDERER!

GLUB-WATER!

AND A NEW MOVE MAKES CERTAIN TORCH DOESN'T GET UP!

THIS IS SOMETHING HE DIDN'T EXPECT!

AND HE DIDN'T EXPECT THAT HOSE I TURNED ON HIM!

NOW THIS ASBESTOS WILL FINISH THE JOB!

JANE NEWELL—THE KILLER'S CONFEDERATE? WHAT DOES THIS MEAN???

STOP! DON'T TOUCH THAT FOOD!

IT'S POISON!

THAT'S A JOKE, SON! BEAT IT. IT'S A POOR EXCUSE FOR BREAKING INTO MY BOUDOIR!

SORRY... SINCE YOU INSIST ON EATING...

OH! WHY, SURE YOU--- YOU'RE TORO!

TORO GIVES A BRIEF EXPLANATION. ...THEN---

THERE'S TORCH'S FLAME-SIGNAL! I'LL JOIN HIM PRONTO!

AS THE YOUTHFUL CRIME-FIGHTER FOLLOWS THE FIRE SIGNAL!

HA-HA! THE FAKE SIGNAL LED HIM RIGHT INTO OUR TRAP!

SOON AFTER, IN A DINGY BASEMENT ROOM!

I'LL CUT OFF THEIR ROPES-- THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO FLAME IN THE AIRLESS ICE CAGE--

HOLD IT TILL I GIVE THEM ANOTHER CONK ON THE HEAD.

GOSH, IT'S COLD! ----UH!!!! JANE AND BOB NEWELL!

RIGHT! I'VE BEEN WEARING A MASK! I SUPPOSE YOU WANT TO KNOW THE REASON WHY? REMEMBER, I'M A STOCK BROKER--

I SOLD A FORTUNE IN FAKE STOCKS TO GRIMES, NORRIS, LABONG -- ONE BY ONE THEY'VE BEEN GETTING DISSATISFIED ABOUT THEIR RETURNS --- SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE!

HELEN HALE AND HER DIARY WERE THE ANSWER SHE HAD GRIEVANCES AGAINST THOSE PEOPLE SHE REALLY HAD A SON BUT HE DIED--BUT IT WASN'T PUBLICLY KNOWN!

VERY INGENIOUS-- YOUR INVENTING THE STORY OF EDWARD AND THE STOLEN DIARY--

THANK YOU! BUT YOU MUST DIE FOR THAT KNOWLEDGE NOW, IN AN AIRLESS ICE CAGE!

UNLESS YOU FREEZE TO DEATH FIRST---- COME ON, JANE ---- "EDWARD HALE" HAS ANOTHER JOB TO DO TONIGHT!

I'LL PUT THE KNIFE BACK ON THE SHELF

BRR-R-R-- AIR'S--GOING FAST---NONE COMING IN--- CAN'T FLAME ON-----

HOLD IT, LAD! MAYBE WE CAN MAKE AN AIR HOLE...

JANE JUST PLACED THE KNIFE ON THE SHELF WITH THE BLADE OUT--- WE'VE GOT TO MOVE THIS CAGE! COME ON, PUSH!

IT'S TOPPLING! WE'LL HAVE TO ROLL THIS ICE CUBE OVER ONCE AGAIN!

IN SOMERSAULT FASHION THE TWO WORK LIKE FIENDS--AS THEIR LUNGS ARE ABOUT TO BURST!

GOOD! THE KNIFE CUT THROUGH-- AIR--WE CAN FLAME!

MINUTES AFTER--AT THE HOME OF THE MURDERING NEWELLS--

I KILL GENE ELTRIDGE TO-NIGHT--THE DIARY SAYS...

IT'S THE END OF YOUR BOOK OF CRIME!

THE TORCH!

AND THE START OF A NEW CHAPTER--- PUNISHMENT!

LATER...

THEY'LL GET THE CHAIR EVEN THEIR BE-ING NEWLY-WEDS WON'T WIN SYMPATHY!

THEY MADE THEIR MISTAKE MARRYING THEMSELVES TO MURDER!

THE END!

A DYING MAN NAMES HIS MURDERER! BUT WHEN **THREE** MEN ANSWER TO THAT NAME, MURDER BECOMES MAYHEM AND A STARTLING MYSTERY, THAT PITS THE HIGH-VOLTAGE TEAM OF **TORCH** AND **TORO** AGAINST DIABOLICAL DARING UNPARALLELED IN THEIR CRIME-FIGHTING CAREER! TERRIFYING SURPRISE SMASHES AROUND EVERY TWISTED TURN AS THE POWER-PACKED PAIR IS TAUNTED BY THE MEN WHO ADMIT THAT...

"ONE OF US *is the* KILLER!"

TORCH & TORO ARE IN THEIR NEW YORK APARTMENT AS THE PHONE RINGS

TORCH SPEAKING-- WHO IS THIS?

I'M RALPH MORTIMER-- I'M AFRAID I'M GOING TO BE MURDERED. I WANT TO TELL YOU EVERYTHING--

BUT-- NEXT MOMENT----

HE'S HERE! JORDAN! NO!--OH-

BANG!

A SHOT! WE'VE GOT TO GET THERE FAST!

AT ONCE THE FLAMING PAIR IS SOARING OVER THE GLITTERING METROPOLIS!

THE PHONE BOOK LISTED RALPH MORTIMER AT 1827 SUTTON PLACE

NEVER A DULL MOMENT, TORCH! WONDER WHAT WE ARE GETTING INTO NOW!

A FEW MINUTES LATER--AT MORTIMER'S EXCLUSIVE APARTMENT--

DEAD!

A BULLET IN HIS CHEST, MADE BY A 32 REVOLVER! NOW WE'VE GOT TO FIND THIS PERSON HE CALLED JORDAN. HE'S OUR KILLER!

HERE'S SOME-THING

THIS "GRACE" WOMAN MIGHT KNOW ABOUT JORDAN--IF WE CAN FIND HER--

AH, AN ADDRESS BOOK--MAYBE THAT WILL HELP US

2

DON'T SEE ANY GRACE--BUT FLAMING FLAMINGOES! THREE JORDANS!

THREE OF THEM AND ONE'S THE MURDERER! WE'LL PAY A VISIT TO NO 1 ON THE LIST--JACK JORDAN--COMING, BOY?

AM I! JUST TRY TO STOP ME!

SECONDS LATER...

PARDON US, JACK JORDAN, FOR NOT KNOCKING--BUT WE'RE IN A RUSH TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE MURDER OF RALPH MORTIMER!

MURDERED! HOW SHOCKING!

YOU DIDN'T KNOW? WHERE'VE YOU BEEN THE LAST HOUR?

I'VE BEEN HOME ALL AFTERNOON, WRITING. I AM A RETIRED REAL ESTATE MAN AND I'VE ALWAYS HAD A YEN TO WRITE A BOOK. I KNEW HIM ONLY SLIGHTLY, THROUGH MY BROTHER LEE WHEN THEY HAD BUSINESS DEALINGS

MAYBE LEE KILLED MORTIMER! ONE OF YOU JORDANS DID!

NOT LEE!--CERTAINLY NOT! HE'S NO MURDERER! OUR COUSIN ARNOLD, A CHEMIST--HE'D BE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE KILLED MORTIMER. THEY DIDN'T GET ALONG---

WE'LL DECIDE THAT--WHERE IS LEE? WE HAVE TWO ADDRESSES FOR HIM. ONE NEAR OCEANDALE

THAT'S HIS ESTATE MANOR LODGE--BUT LEE'S IN HIS CITY APARTMENT NOW. I SAW HIM IN TOWN THIS MORNING.

AND WE'LL BE SEEING HIM NOW, EH, TORCH?

BUT, THE POWERHOUSE BOYS ENTER LEE JORDAN'S APARTMENT TO FIND--

NOT HERE! THIS ROOM LOOKS LIKE HE PACKED IN A GREAT HURRY TO GET AWAY. LET'S LOOK AROUND.

AND IN THE NEXT ROOM--

BILLS--BILLS! HE OWES A STACK OF MONEY. MMM, SOME OF THESE BILLS ARE FROM A PSYCHIATRIST. SO LEE'S UNDER MENTAL TREATMENT.

HE'S SURE IN DEEP. LOOK AT THESE BOOKS! "THE STUDY OF THE HUMAN MIND"--"THE NEUROTIC"-- --WOW!

WE'VE DONE THE WHOLE PLACE. NOTHING ELSE HERE. WHERE TO NOW? DO YOU THINK HE'S GONE TO MANOR LODGE?

LET'S TRY THERE!

TRAVELLING AT METEORIC SPEED, THE FLAMING PAIR REACHES MANOR LODGE--

WHEW! THIS MAKES OUR FIFTH CIRCLE AROUND OCEANDALE.

EVERYONE HAS A DIFFERENT DIRECTION TO MANOR LODGE. BETTER ASK AGAIN.

MANOR LODGE? IT'S A MILE NORTH OF HERE. I BEEN THERE ONCE OR TWICE ON SOME REPAIRING JOBS. MR LEE JORDAN KEEPS TO HIMSELF, SO MOST FOLKS AIN'T BEEN THERE.

SO WE GATHERED--THANKS! ON OUR WAY, TORO!

MANOR LODGE AT LAST! RISING ON A BLUFF SILHOUETTED GLOOMILY AGAINST THE SKY!

NICE PLACE FOR A MURDER!

IT BRINGS OUT THE ZOMBIE IN ME--BOO-

AS THE FIRE-TEAM STEPS INTO THE MUSTY MANSION--

THAT MUST BE LEE. RATHER NICE-LOOKING CHAP--MMM, HE'S LEFT-HANDED--AND NERVOUS. HAVING TROUBLE IN LIGHTING THAT CIGARETTE--**LEE JORDAN!**

OH! WHO ARE YOU? WHAT RIGHT HAVE YOU TO BREAK INTO MY HOUSE?

STEADY, JORDAN! WE'RE INVESTIGATING THE MURDER OF RALPH MORTIMER. YOU HAD BUSINESS DEALINGS WITH HIM! WHAT KIND?

I INVESTED SOME MONEY WITH HIM AND DIDN'T THINK I WAS GETTING ENOUGH OF A RETURN. BUT WE PATCHED UP OUR QUARREL--GOODNESS, DO YOU SUSPECT **ME?** I DIDN'T KILL HIM!

WHY DID YOU LEAVE YOUR NEW YORK APARTMENT SO SUDDENLY?

I COULDN'T STAND IT ANOTHER MINUTE. THE CITY STIFLES ME! BUT SEE HERE, WHY BOTHER **ME?** IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR MURDER MOTIVES, ASK MY COUSIN ARNOLD. HE WAS HERE A FEW MINUTES AGO, ON HIS WAY HOME TO OCEANDALE

WE'LL CALL ON HIM! BUT THAT **DOESN'T MEAN WE WON'T BE BACK!**

HE'S SURE HIGH-STRUNG

WAIT, TORO. THAT PLANT! I WONDER--

SURE ENOUGH! I'M **RIGHT!** A 32 CALIBER GUN--THE **SAME** KIND AS THE MURDER WEAPON.

I DIDN'T HIDE IT THERE/ THAT MUST HAVE BEEN ARNOLD'S DOING! HE'S TRYING TO FRAME ME/ I'LL FIX HIM!

CALM DOWN. YOU'RE STAYING HERE!

LET ME GO/ I'VE GOT TO SETTLE THE SCORE WITH HIM/ HE'S ALWAYS PUSHED ME INTO TROUBLE/ YOU CAN'T STOP ME/ FARO/ CAIN/

SUDDENLY TWO MONSTROUS MAN-EATING DOGS RACE IN FOR AN UNEXPECTED ATTACK/

HA/ GOOD DOGS/ GET THEM!

FLAME, TORO!

SECONDS LATER/

SOME PETS HE KEEPS!

NICE DOGGIES, EH?

I GUESS THEY DIDN'T LIKE OUR FIRE TOUCH--OH--OH-- JORDAN'S GETTING AWAY/ COME ON!

FOOTSTEPS RACE DOWN THE CELLAR STAIRS

DOWN HERE!

THEY'RE ON MY TRAIL BUT NOT FOR LONG! NOW INTO THIS REFRIGERATOR

RACING THE FULL LENGTH OF THE REFRIGERATOR HE STOPS AND--

GOOD! THEY'RE INSIDE. NOW I'LL PRESS THIS AUTOMATIC BUTTON!

WE'LL GET HIM NOW!

BANG

HE WENT OUT THIS--IT'S SLAMMED SHUT!

SO HAS THE OTHER DOOR!

LOCKED IN AN ICY PRISON!

OOOMPH! CAN'T BUDGE THESE DOORS-- AND THE COLD'S KEEPING US FROM FLAMING ENOUGH TO BURN THROUGH!

BRRRR-- IF WE DON'T GET OUT SOON, WE'LL FREEZE TO DEATH!

KEEP MOVING, BOY! IF THERE WERE ONLY SOMETHING HERE WE COULD USE--

NOTHING BUT MEAT SLABS-- AND MEAT HOOKS-- CAN THOSE HOOKS DO YOU ANY GOOD?

TORO! YOU'VE GIVEN ME AN IDEA! I'M GOING TO PRY OFF ONE OF THOSE HOOKS!

I DON'T GET IT!

PULLING OFF A HOOK, TORO WORKS AGAINST TIME!

THESE PIPES CONTAIN AMMONIA FUMES! NOW STAND BACK!

AH, NOW I GET IT!

THROUGH THE OPENING THE DEADLY AMMONIA FUMES POUR OUT!

WE CAN'T GET UP ANY MORE FLAME THAN THIS--BUT WHEN THIS FIRE-BALL CONTACTS THOSE AMMONIA FUMES, IT SHOULD DO THE TRICK!

A SECOND LATER

THAT'S DONE IT!

BOOM!

HURRY! THE WALL'S BLASTED!

WHEW, WHAT A CLOSE SHAVE--BUT YOU SURE OUTWITTED LEE JORDAN!

BUT HE GOT A HEAD START ON US. HOPE WE CAN GET TO ARNOLD'S OCEANDALE PLACE BEFORE LEE DOES.

SOON

DO YOU THINK LEE WAS REALLY FRAMED, AND THAT MADE HIM FURIOUS ENOUGH TO GO HAY-WIRE?

POSSIBLY. HE'S SO HIGH-STRUNG, ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN--BUT WE'RE NOT SURE--AH, HERE'S THE HOUSE.

THE NEXT MOMENT!

HOLY SMOKES!

GUESS WE'RE TOO LATE! BUT WE'RE GOING IN!

RACING THROUGH DEBRIS, THE FLAMING SPEEDSTERS LOCATE A SHATTERED BODY!

THIS WATCH FOB WITH A.J. ON IT MUST BELONG TO ARNOLD JORDAN

THIS WAS HIS CHEMICAL LAB. I SAW SOME BROKEN TEST-TUBES. MAYBE WE CAN FIND SOMETHING IN THE REST OF THE HOUSE.

IN THE LIVING-ROOM

LOOK, TORO--THIS IS THE SAME WOMAN WHOSE PICTURE WE FOUND AT MORTIMER'S--AND READ THIS LETTER I CAME ACROSS--

HERE'S THE MURDER MOTIVE ARNOLD LOST HIS FIANCEE TO MORTIMER, AND GOT EVEN. I'M CONVINCED NOW ARNOLD DID PLANT THAT GUN ON LEE, WHO WENT BERSERK--

--AND SET OFF THE EXPLOSION! BUT GOSH--WHERE DID LEE GO NOW? HEY, LOOK AT THE CROWD OF PEOPLE OUT HERE!

GOING OUTSIDE, TORCH AND TORO MAKE INQUIRIES.

BEFORE THE EXPLOSION I SAW A MAN RUNNING AWAY TOWARD THE OCEAN. HE WAS DARK-HAIRED, HAD A MOUSTACHE, AND LOOKED WILD-EYED, LIKE A CRAZY MAN!

THAT'S LEE JORDAN! WE'VE GOT TO CATCH HIM! COME ON, TORO!

OVER THE SEA ROAD STREAKS THE FIERY PAIR!

NO SIGN OF HIM --- WHAT'S ALL THAT COMING?

LOOKS LIKE A POSSE. BETTER GO DOWN!

WE'RE ON THE HUNT FOR LEE JORDAN. I GOT SOME OF HIS CLOTHES FROM MANOR LODGE, AND GAVE THE BLOOD-HOUNDS THE SCENT. HEY! LOOK AT 'EM GO TO THE HILL.

BOW WOW

THOSE PUPPIES SURE KNOW THEIR WAY AROUND!

THEY'RE HEADED STRAIGHT UP THE HILL!

THEN ABRUPTLY!

THE HOUNDS'VE STOPPED. THE TRAIL ENDING LIKE THIS MEANS ONE THING - LEE JORDAN JUMPED INTO THE OCEAN AND DROWNED HIMSELF!

IT'S THE ONLY ANSWER --

AS THE POSSE RETIRES FROM THE HILL---

WE MIGHT AS WELL GO, TOO! TORCH, WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?

THOSE ROCKS, TORO -- THEY LEAD ALL THE WAY DOWN THE CLIFF AND ROCKS DON'T CARRY A SCENT--IF JORDAN WALKED ON THEM, IT WOULD EXPLAIN THE HOUNDS LOSING THE TRAIL--WE'RE GOING TO FOLLOW THOSE ROCKS!

THE PAIR PURSUES THE TRAIL DOWN THE CLIFF

WE'RE NOT FAR FROM MANOR LODGE THIS CLIFF'S GOT SOME GOOD HIDING PLACES

I SEE ONE POSSIBILITY AN OPENING IN THAT ROCK LET'S LOOK IN

LOOKS LIKE A PRETTY DEEP CAVE

MOVE CAUTIOUSLY--HE MAY BE--WHAT'S THAT SHADOW?

FLAMING IN A FLASH SECOND, TORCH WHIRLS ABOUT--AS A GUN CRASHES!

STOPPED THOSE BULLETS JUST IN TIME! CAME FROM THE ENTRANCE! LET'S GO!

HOPE WE NAB HIM THIS TIME!

BUT GOSH, HE GOT AWAY AGAIN!

THE POSSE'S COMING BACK! WONDER WHAT'S UP?

THE SHERIFF REPEATS THE QUERY

WHAT'S UP? WE SAW YOU TWO FLYING AROUND AND THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE UP TO SOMETHING NEW.

TORCH! TORO!

WE ARE! THE KILLER DIDN'T DROWN! HE'S AROUND HERE! JUST SHOT AT US!

WHY, IT'S JACK JORDAN!

AFTER YOU CALLED ON ME, I BECAME SO WORRIED ABOUT MY BROTHER LEE, I DROVE OUT TO MANOR LODGE. THEN I CAUGHT SIGHT OF YOU. WHAT'S HAPPENED?

LEE'S A KILLER AND WE'RE AFTER HIM!

A KILLER? THESE DOGS! GET THEM AWAY!

GET DOWN, HOUNDS! THIS ISN'T OUR MAN!

BUT HE IS! JACK JORDAN'S THE KILLER!

THAT'S PREPOSTEROUS! HOW COULD I?

BECAUSE YOU AND LEE ARE THE **SAME**! LEE WAS LEFT-HANDED AND THE BULLETS FIRED AT ME CAME FROM A **RIGHT-HANDED** PERSON. A LEFT-HANDED PERSON WOULD HAVE HIT MY RIGHT SIDE, NOT THE LEFT! **YOU** FIRED THEM!

THE DOGS **DIDN'T** MAKE A MISTAKE. AS FOR THE **DUAL** ROLE--THE BOOK YOU'RE WRITING IS ON THE THEATRE. I'M SURE YOU'VE BEEN AN ACTOR!

THE JIG'S UP, JORDAN!

ALL RIGHT, **BUT**--

BUT THE CUNNING KILLER MOVES IN SWIFT SURPRISE!

I'M GETTING AWAY--WITH THE SHERIFF AS MY SHIELD! IF ANYONE TRIES TO STOP ME, THE SHERIFF DIES! STAY WHERE YOU ARE, EVERYONE!

THAT ROCK--

JUST ONE MORE THING BEFORE I LEAVE YOU. YOU MIGHT WANT IT FOR YOUR RECORD. THERE **NEVER** WAS AN ARNOLD JORDAN EITHER! I PLAYED THE GREATEST ROLE OF MY CAREER! **THE THREE MR. JORDANS!**

AS THE MURDERER, JACK JORDAN, BACKS AWAY--

GOOD WORK, TORO! HIS GOOSE IS COOKED! NOW THERE'RE A FEW THINGS I WANT TO KNOW!

SOON AFTER, AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

WHY DID YOU KILL MORTIMER?

WE HAD ONCE WORKED IN THE THEATER TOGETHER. THERE WAS A COSTLY BACKSTAGE THEFT. I FOUND OUT THAT IT HAD BEEN COMMITTED BY MORTIMER, AND BLACKMAILED HIM FROM THEN ON --

--LATELY, HE SHOWED SIGNS OF BREAKING. I WAS AFRAID HE'D CONFESS AND TURN ME IN TO THE POLICE. I FIRST PLANNED ON CREATING ONLY LEE JORDAN AND PINNING THE MURDER ON HIM. THEN I THOUGHT ANOTHER JORDAN TRYING TO FRAME LEE WOULD MAKE THE CASE STRONGER. SO I ESTABLISHED ARNOLD, TOO. AS FOR THEIR RESIDENCES, I HAD PROPERTY FROM MY REAL ESTATE BUSINESS --

BUT THAT MAN WE FOUND IN THE WRECKED HOUSE?

HE WAS A TRAMP I HAD MET NEAR OCEANDALE. I LET HIM STAY THERE. HE FITTED IN PERFECTLY WITH MY PLAN -- A REMARKABLE PLAN, WASN'T IT?

BEATS ANY I EVER SAW!

I CAN SAY THAT, TOO

THEN LET THE WORLD KNOW THAT JACK JORDAN, REGARDED AS A FAILURE ON THE STAGE, NEVER GIVEN A STAR PART -- LET THEM KNOW WHAT A GREAT ACTOR I AM! IN MY DEFEAT I HAVE **TRIUMPHED!**

AH! I CAN SEE THE HEADLINES IN ALL THE PAPERS! THE RAVE PRESS NOTICES!

RAVE ON! YOU CAN READ 'EM IN THE DEATH CELL!

WHEW! HE'S AS CRAZY AS LEE -- OH, PARDON ME, THERE WAS **NO** LEE! WOW, NOW **I'M** DOING IT, TOO!

THE END!

GOLD IN THOSE HILLS

A chill chased itself up Bert's back as he saw the sun-framed shadows of the two men upon the opposite bank of the gully. They were coming up to the ridge above him and Bert watched them grow, saw the silhouetted shape of a rifle in the hands of one.

For a full moment Bert continued to rock the sluice box. His eyes watched the now motionless shadows of the men. They were looking down upon him. His own rifle was beyond reach. No chance to grab it. Bert turned on his heels to look up.

Dan Pritchard nodded a greeting. Bert's eyes narrowed as he took Dan in, and his companion Chris Peters. Bert had seen them a couple of times in Corner Rock, but had paid them no heed at the time.

Now Dan Pritchard's cruel-lipped face hinted at imminent danger as he said, "Just happened to be passing and thought we'd stop off. Heard in town Jed struck it pretty rich."

"Funny I didn't hear of it," Bert answered. "We've taken wages out of this creek but no more."

Dan glanced aside at his companion, then ploughed down the bank to where Bert stood.

"Maybe Jed's putting one over on you," Dan suggested casually. "It wouldn't be the first time—"

"With Jed it would!" Bert felt the muscles of his body bunch. He added quietly, "You're butting into our business—"

The words died as Chris Peters cocked the carbine. Bert turned to stare up, saw that the weapon was pointed straight at him now.

Dan Pritchard laughed. "We're making it our business. Since you won't talk, we'll all go back to the cabin and see what Jed's got to say."

Jed wasn't at the cabin. Dan said, "We'd better tie the kid up. Jed might get tough and we don't want any interference."

Even as Dan spoke Chris Peters had moved around, looping Bert's wrists together and yanking the rope tight. He shoved Bert toward a corner.

"If you try to tip Jed off," Dan warned, "you'll probably get hurt."

It was evening before Bert heard Jed's cheery whistle as he came up the slope from the valley, yanked the latch string and stepped inside. He swung the door shut behind him and the whistle died shortly.

"What's this?" Jed demanded, his leathery face hardening.

"Just stopped off to have a little chat," Dan answered quietly. "About the gold you been talking about back in town. Either your partner's dumb or you've been putting something over on him. Seems he doesn't know what it's all about."

"He sure doesn't," Jed agreed. "How about it, Jed? You want to tell us about it without us getting rough?"

Jed shook his head. His lips parted but he never had a chance to speak. Bert saw the blow coming, delivered by Chris Peters with the barrel of the carbine. Bert remembered yelling. He saw Jed try to duck, but it was too late. The barrel crashed down. It was a glancing blow, probably so intended to cause severe pain rather than knock the victim out completely. Jed's body went limp. He dropped to the floor, on hands and knees, his head hanging. Blood was running across his face. His hand groped for the edge of the table, and he started up.

Dan Pritchard's hand dipped into his pocket, and came out holding a quirt. He stepped in close and struck. Again it was a damaging blow. Jed reeled backward, and was caught from behind by Chris.

It was more than Bert could stand. He lunged clumsily to his feet, leaped forward and kicked at Dan Pritchard's hand. The blow landed. Dan leaped away, his lips writhing with pain. The quirt jerked up into the air.

Bert tried to duck. But he was handicapped with his hands bound behind him. The blow came down with a crash. Pain rocketed into his neck and shoulders. He pitched to the floor.

Lantern light now lit the inside of the cabin. Bert opened his eyes. His neck and shoulders were stiff. He managed to struggle to a sitting position. The smell of coffee was in the air. Chris Peters and Dan Pritchard were eating.

Dully Bert surveyed the cabin. Then he saw Jed in a corner on the floor. As he crawled over beside Jed and bent down, Bert saw the old man was still breathing, but was unconscious.

Bert sagged against the wall, feeling his body trembling. The waiting, the sound of Jed's

labored breathing was almost more than he could stand. Yet there was nothing he could do. Dan had made up his mind that Jed had a rich find hidden somewhere.

Suddenly Jed's voice sounded. Bert straightened his aching body. Jed was muttering incoherently. He was delirious.

The sound of Jed's muttering roused Dan and he got up, and came across the room slowly to stand looking down into the darkness of the corner.

"What's he grumbling about?" Dan Pritchard demanded harshly.

"You tell me," Bert retorted. "He's delirious. He needs a doctor and if he doesn't get one he'll lie there and die!"

"Shut up," Dan snarled. He thrust the toe of his boot into Jed's side roughly. "Hey, you," Dan yelled. "Wake up there!"

Jed's muttering drifted off. Dan walked away. Again Jed muttered incoherently. His body twitched nervously. He turned his head into the light. His face was bloody, battered, and the eyes, half open, were glazed and unseeing. Suddenly he made a tremendous effort, hauled himself laboriously to his elbow.

"Gold . . ." he croaked harshly. "Gold . . . Bert . . ."

The voice died out and the old man fell back. His breath rattled. Bert felt his own heart stop.

Jed's voice returned slowly, painfully. "Gold," he whispered. "We—we found it, Bert—in—ravine—"

Dan Pritchard grated accusingly, "So there *is* rich gold somewhere, eh? You knew about it. You let your partner take all the punishment. Okay, son. It's *your* turn now, or maybe you'd rather tell us where Jed's find is!"

For a moment Bert hesitated. There *wasn't* any find. Jed was in a coma, was raving about the time they'd panned a ravine back in the hills. It had proved worthless . . .

"Okay," Bert agreed hopelessly. "I'll show you."

Maybe this was his chance, Bert told himself. He'd lead them back into the hills. He'd show them the old ravine he and Jed had panned, for practically nothing. And while he was doing that, perhaps he'd get his chance.

Scattered pine and live-oak clothed the side of the ravine. Bert stumbled down into the bottom. Dan Pritchard and Chris Peters were on his heels. Both were armed. Escape seemed remote, impossible . . .

At last Bert paused at the site of the old diggings he and Jed had worked together. Moonlight bathed them starkly. This was the end.

Doggedly Bert said, "Jed was talking through his hat. This is the place he was babbling about. But we never found much here. We worked it a couple of months last year—"

"Don't stall!" Dan Pritchard warned. "You can't fool me!"

His hand went back to his pocket.

Then Dan Pritchard crumpled slowly. Even as he struck the ground, the sound of a .30-30 came to Bert. He stumbled back, almost falling, and twisted around to stare up at the lip of the ravine. He saw the man there with the rifle at his shoulder.

Chris Peters let out a yell. "Don't shoot. Don't kill me!"

The man came down the bank slowly, the .30-30 poised in readiness. He reached the bottom and Bert gasped, "Jed! How—what—"

Quietly Jed answered, "I had to get these hombres out of the cabin, so I'd have a chance to do something. They heard me telling Sam Henry in town about what I'd found."

"Then there *is* something!"

Jed nodded. "Take it easy, pard. I've been disappointed too often. That's why I checked before I let you know. And I pulled that stunt back at the cabin to get them out here where I could handle them. Now let's get back and start digging—for *our* gold!"

SL-1305

THE END

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933

of The Mystery Novels published quarterly at Mamaroneck, Conn., for October 1st, 1946.

State of New York } ss.
County of New York }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Martin Goodman, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the The Mystery Novels and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to-wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Willis Publishing Corporation, Inc., 330 West 42nd Avenue, N. Y. N. Y. Editor, Allen Lane, 330 West 42nd Avenue, N. Y. N. Y. Managing Editor, Allen Lane, 330 West 42nd Avenue, N. Y. N. Y. Business Manager, Martin Goodman, 330 West 42nd Avenue, N. Y. N. Y.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, give the name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.)

Willis Publishing Corporation, Inc., 330 West 42nd Avenue, N. Y. N. Y. Martin Goodman, 330 West 42nd Avenue, N. Y. N. Y. Abraham Goodman, 330 West 42nd Avenue, N. Y. N. Y. Arthur Goodman, 330 West 42nd Avenue, N. Y. N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.)

None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

(Signed) MARTIN GOODMAN.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 9th day of September, 1946.

(SEAL) BELLITA PFEIFFER.

(My commission expires March 30, 1947.)

AS A GRISLY CORPSE LEAVES ITS TOMB, MURDER STRIKES IN STRANGE, FIENDISH FASHION, CREATING BAFFLING MYSTERY! HOW DOES A MAN DROWN ON DRY LAND? HOW CAN A FLEETING MURDERING GHOST BE ENSNARED? YES, THIS IS INDEED A BIZARRE PUZZLE OF DEATH FOR THAT DARING DUO TORCH AND TORO AS THEY TRAVEL PERILOUS PATHS, SEEKING TO SOLVE THE CASE OF ...

The GHOST OF SHADOW MANOR!

AT THE DEATHBED OF AN OLD, OLD MAN...

REJOICE, MY NIECE AND NEPHEWS! I'M ABOUT TO DIE AND I LEAVE A FORTUNE BEHIND! I KNOW YOU COULD HARDLY WAIT FOR THIS DAY! BUT I'LL *RETURN* TO SHADOW MANOR!

YOUR UNCLE WILLIS IS DEAD!

WHAT DID HE MEAN, HE'LL RETURN?

HE ALWAYS TALKED ECCENTRIC, KAY... WHAT WOULD HE BE DOING AT SHADOW MANOR ANYWAY? IT'S BEEN CLOSED FOR YEARS!

LATER, AT THE READING OF THE WILL...

"...AND I BEQUEATH MY FORTUNE TO MY NIECE KAY AND MY NEPHEWS GEORGE AND ROY JAMES. IF THEY SPEND 24 CONSECUTIVE HOURS AT *SHADOW MANOR!* SHOULD ANY OF THEM DIE, THE MONEY GOES TO THE SURVIVOR!

YOU'D THINK WE'RE MARKED FOR DEATH!

THAT NIGHT IN NEW YORK, THE FAMED TORCH GETS AN URGENT WIRE!

I MET KAY AT A PARTY HERE A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO! NICE GIRL... WE'LL ANSWER HER S.O.S.!

TELEGRAM

PLEASE COME AT ONCE TO SHADOW MANOR, MARSHALL, KENTUCKY. MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH.

KAY JAMES

AND THE METEORIC FLAME PAIR ROCKETS ON A RECORD-BREAKING FLIGHT — TO STRANGE ADVENTURE!

I...IT'S IT—ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTIONS!

GOSH! I'VE SEEN BRIGHTER SPOTS IN A BORIS KARLOFF MOVIE!

TORCH AND TORO! I'M SO GLAD YOU'VE COME! MEET MY COUSINS — GEORGE, A CHEMIST — AND ROY, WELL JUST A GLOBE TROTTER!

SO YOU INVITED PROTECTORS, KAY!

WHY NOT? THE WILL DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT NOT HAVING GUESTS!

SUDDENLY...

TORCH AND TORO CAN'T SAVE YOU! NOTHING CAN! HA-HA-HA!

THAT VOICE! IT SOUNDS LIKE UNCLE WILLIS! BUT-BUT...HE'S DEAD!

AND BURIED DOWNSTAIRS IN THE VAULT!

BURIED DOWN-STAIRS?

YES! ONE OF THE STIPULATIONS OF UNCLE'S WILL, THAT HIS BODY BE BURIED HERE! BUT THAT VOICE! IT'S - IT'S AS IF HE'S BACK FROM THE DEAD!

TO SETTLE THAT, WE'LL GO DOWN AND VIEW THE BODY!

THE BODY'S GONE! HE'S LEFT HIS GRAVE!

HE'S COME BACK! HE SAID HE WOULD!

YES, THAT'S IT! HE SAID HE... WHERE'S ROY?

HE WAS HERE A MINUTE AGO. THAT CRY!

AAAAGHHH!

IT'S ROY! SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO HIM!

THAT SHADOW! SOMEBODY MUST BE IN THERE!

THE NEXT INSTANT...

SOMEONE WAS HERE! HA-HA-HA!

IN LIGHTNING TIME THE DARING BOYS REGAIN THEIR MIND—BUT THE EVIL BEING HAS VANISHED!

ROY'S *DEAD*—STRANGLED! HMM, THIS IS ODD... SIX FINGER-MARKS ON HIS THROAT, THE POSITION OF WHICH INDICATES THEY WERE MADE BY *ONE HAND!*

OH! IT'S HORRIBLE! UNCLE SAID WE'D DIE STRANGE DEATHS!

BUT *I'M* NOT GOING TO BE SCARED OUT OF THIS!

NEITHER AM I!

JUST THE SAME, YOU TWO BETTER NOT BE ROAMING AROUND! EACH OF YOU GO TO YOUR ROOM, AND KEEP YOUR DOOR LOCKED! WE HAVE SOME INVESTIGATING TO DO!

SOON!

THAT'S THE BEST WE CAN DO FOR NOW! THEY'RE LOCKED IN THEIR ROOMS, DOORS BOLTED TIGHT—WINDOWS SHUTTERED... NOW TO EXPLORE! WE'LL SEARCH THE HOUSE FOR THE APPARITION!

OKAY, TORCH!

MINUTES OF SEARCH...

NOTHING SO FAR! AN OLD HOUSE LIKE THIS MIGHT HAVE SOME SECRET PANEL!

TORCH! TORCH!

IT'S KAY!

I'M WORRIED! GEORGE LEFT HIS ROOM! I HEARD FOOTSTEPS IN THE HALLWAY. PEERED THROUGH THE KEYHOLE, AND SAW HIM GOING DOWNSTAIRS! OH!

SOUNDS LIKE GEORGE OUT THERE!

OHHHHH!

SWIFTLY...

IT'S COMING FROM THE FOUNTAIN!

GOSH! LOOKS LIKE A GHOST!

OHHHHH!

IT'S BROKE ALL RIGHT!

AND THAT GHOSTLY BUSINESS IS GONE!

HE'S DEAD! THE BODY SHOWS SYMPTOMS OF DROWNING—DISTENDED LUNGS—BUT THERE'S NO WATER IN THIS FOUNTAIN!

THE FOUNTAIN HASN'T BEEN TURNED ON IN YEARS!

READ THIS—IT MUST HAVE TEMPTED HIM TO COME!

OH...THAT'S UNCLE WILLIS' HANDWRITING! UNCLE WILLIS IS WITH US SOMEHOW!

STEADY, KAY... WE'LL TAKE YOU BACK TO THE HOUSE!

George, Meet me at the fountain. Oh the money will be yours if you do

LET ME STAY HERE! I COULDN'T REMAIN IN MY ROOM AFTER ALL THIS... OH, I'VE LOST MY LOCKET! IT WAS A GOOD LUCK PIECE!

IT'S RISKY! TURO, YOU STAY WITH KAY EVERY MOMENT! I'M GOING BACK TO THE FOUNTAIN!

THE WAY THAT APPARITION APPEARED AND DISAPPEARED THERE, CONVINCES ME ALL THE MORE OF A SECRET PASSAGEWAY! AND ONE END OF IT MUST BE AT THAT FOUNTAIN!

MMM, THIS STONE SOUNDS HOLLOW! THERE IS SOMETHING BEHIND HERE!

THE STONE'S SWINGING OPEN / STEPS! I THOUGHT SO!

NO SOONER DOES TORCH TAKE A STEP INSIDE...

GET THE THONGS, BANDY / THIS BLOW WILL KEEP HIM STUNNED UNTIL WE HAVE HIM TIED UP!

SOON AFTER... GREETINGS! FLAMING ***WON'T BURN*** THOSE THONGS BECAUSE THEY'RE ENTIRELY COVERED WITH ***SUPER-ASBESTOS!*** WE KNEW YOU'D COME HERE! WE HEARD KAY PHONE IN THE WIRE TO THE TELEGRAPH OFFICE!

YOUR VOICE— YOU SOUND LIKE ***ROY!***

RIGHT! MY DEATH WAS A BLUFF! I LEARNED THE ART OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION WHILE IN INDIA... I TOOK MY UNCLE'S BODY FROM THE VAULT TO MAKE HIM APPEAR AS THE CAUSE OF THE MURDERS. AND BANDY IMITATED HIS VOICE THAT SAVE THE WARNING! ALSO HIS HANDWRITING!

BUT NONE OF YOU WILL ESCAPE! I FOUND KAY'S LOCKET, AND SET A POISON PIN IN ITS BACK... I'LL SEE THAT SHE FINDS THE LOCKET! AND WHEN SHE TOUCHES THE POISON, AS SHE'S SURE TO — ***AFFT!*** OH, WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOUR LITTLE CHUM TORO. ***AND YOU TOO!***

THEY'VE GONE... I CAN'T BURN THROUGH THESE THONGS! I'VE A HUNCH ABOUT WHAT'S IN ***THAT TANK!*** GOT TO PLAY THAT HUNCH! IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE!

WHILE BACK AT THE HOUSE, THE LETHAL LOCKET HAS BEEN DROPPED INTO THE PATH OF ...

GOSH, TORCH HAS BEEN GONE A LONG TIME! WE'D BETTER LOOK FOR HIM!

OH—MY LOCKET!

AS THE UNSUSPECTING KAY IS ABOUT TO PICK UP THE DEADLY JEWELRY...

AN EXPLOSION!

I'M GOING! SOMETHING MUST'VE HAPPENED TO TORCH!

AFTER THOSE KILLERS, TORPO!

THAT'S THE END OF YOUR SCHEME, ROY JAMES, TO CLAIM THE ENTIRE FORTUNE!

LATER, AT HEADQUARTERS, AFTER ROY'S CONFESSION...

THE MONEY'S ALL YOURS, KAY... BUT, TORCH, DID GEORGE DIE BY DROWNING?

NO! IT WAS FROM INHALING CHLORINE GAS, WHICH PRODUCES THE SAME REACTION! RELEASED FROM A TANK, IT GAVE THE FOUNTAIN A GHOSTLY HAZE!

THE KILLER FIXED UP THE TANK TRAP IN CASE OF PURSUIT! I SENT FIRE-BALLS INTO THE TANK WHICH CAUSED THE EXPLOSION AS FLAME CONTACTED GAS! I CUT MY BONDS ON SOME BROKEN METAL THAT FELL MY WAY...

OKAY?

I'LL SAY!

WIN BIG CASH PRIZES!

ARE YOU A KNITTIN' KITTEN?
A CLEVER COOKIE?
GOT OCEANS OF NOTIONS?

4 BIG CONTESTS IN THE APRIL ISSUE OF Miss America

1 COOKING

WHAT'S COOKING ON **YOUR** BURNER IN THE SWEET-STUFF DEPARTMENT? WHIP UP THE TASTIEST, TEMPTINGEST COOKIES, CAKES OR CANDY AND WIN BIG *CASH* PRIZES FOR THEM!

2 PAINTING

...WITHOUT A BRUSH! PLASTIC PAINTS TO HELP DESIGN COSTLY-COOKING ITEMS, WITH LITTLE COST! NO END TO THE THINGS YOU CAN DO, THE MONEY YOU CAN MAKE IN THIS KEEN NEW COMPETITION!

3 IDEAS

FOR FANCY-FLUFF AND FUN! RUFFLE YOUR OWN-PICTURE FRAMES, APRONS - OH, SO MANY THINGS - AND WIN GIANT CASH AWARDS!

4 KNITTING AND CROCHETING

USE YOUR NOODLE AND YOUR NEEDLE - AND COME UP WITH SOME PRETTY, PRACTICAL PRIZE-WINNERS! ALSO SURE-FIRE TO MAKE YOUR POCKETS JINGLE-JANGLE!

For all the important details see the

APRIL ISSUE OF Miss America

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SUB-MARINER

BETTY DEAN OFTEN GOES TO GREAT LENGTHS TO GET A STORY, BUT WHEN SHE INVADES THE DEEP WATER LOCKERS OF DAVY JONES IN SEARCH OF NEWS SHE FINDS HERSELF FACE TO FACE WITH DEATH! MURDER AND TERROR STALK HER UNTIL SUB-MARINER, JINES HIS STRENGTH AND NIMBLE BRAIN TO HELP HER FIGHT—

"The FATAL CURSE OF THE SEA WITCH!"

ABOARD THE SPONGE SHIP "SEA WITCH" BETTY PREPARES FOR A DIVE...

I STILL THINK THE WHOLE IDEA IS SILLY.' CAPTAIN MOODY COULD TELL YOU ALL YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT SPONGES, WITHOUT...

BUT, HAMOR, I WANT THE WOMAN'S ANGLE!

IS MY HELMET READY?

YES, AND REMEMBER THE PHONE IS CONNECTED TO GALLERY! LET HIM KNOW IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH AIR!

MOMENTS LATER...

IT'S CREEPY DOWN HERE! BAILEY'S MOVING! GUESS HE WANTS ME TO STICK CLOSE TO HIM!

WHAT'S THAT? IT LOOKS LIKE A SHIP!

HELLO, GALLERY! WE'VE STUMBLED ONTO A SUNKEN SHIP! WE'RE GOING CLOSER!

THE LOST "ALBATROSS"! THERE'S A FORTUNE IN IVORY HERE!

ALBATROSS

BUT SUDDENLY...

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH BAILEY! AND I--I--C--CAN'T BREATHE...

HEY! SOMETHING'S WRONG! I'D BETTER BRING THEM UP... FAST!

HUH? NEVER MIND! I'LL GO AFTER THEM!

GET THE OXYGEN TANKS READY! HURRY!

THEY'RE BOTH OUT COLD! I'LL HAVE TO GET THEM UP QUICKLY!

IN A FEW MINUTES...

BAILEY'S DEAD! WHAT HAPPENED?

I... I DON'T KNOW! THE AIR FLOW STOPPED SUDDENLY AND—

YOUR AIR LINES MUST'VE SNAPPED!

I'LL RECORD THIS IN MY LOG AND HEAD FOR SHORE AT ONCE!

OHH!! MY HEAD!!

MEANWHILE...

THAT SHOULD TAKE CARE OF THE EVIDENCE! NOW I'LL HAVE TO FIGURE A WAY TO GET THAT LOG BOOK AND PREVENT CAPTAIN MOODY FROM MAKING HIS REPORT!

AND THEN... THE "SEA HITCH" RETURNS TO SHORE...

OHH! THERE GOES THE CAPTAIN! I WANTED TO TELL HIM ABOUT THE "ALBATROSS"

"ALBATROSS"? WHAT ABOUT IT?

SUDDENLY!

WH-I— LOOK OUT!

WOW!! WHAT A BLOW! GOT TO GET TO HIM!

SECONDS LATER...

NAMOR! IS HE DEAD?

YES, BETTY! HE WAS DEAD BEFORE HE HIT THE WATER!

THERE'S SOMETHING ODD ABOUT ALL THIS! I'LL TAKE THAT LOG BOOK AND REPORT TO THE SHIP'S OFFICIALS!

NO, GALLERY. I'LL MAKE THE REPORT MYSELF! YOU WATCH THE SHIP AND DON'T LET ANY-ONE LEAVE!

YOU GO BACK TO YOUR PAPER AND WRITE ABOUT SPONGES, BETTY! THIS LOOKS LIKE MURDER AND I DON'T WANT—

MURDER? BUT, NAMOR!

SOME-TIMES NAMOR MAKES ME SO MAD! I'LL GET BACK ABOARD AND DIG UP A FEW CLUES FOR MYSELF!

BUT AS SUB-MARINER STARTS FOR THE SHIP'S OFFICE, A FIGURE FOLLOWS STEALTHILY AND—

WITHOUT THAT LOG, I'D NEVER FIND THE IVORY!

AND AS SUB-MARINER REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS—

WOW! WHAT A LUMP! THE LOG BOOK! IT'S GONE! AND I WAS HOPING IT WOULD PROVIDE A CLUE FOR THIS MESS!

LATER, AT THE OFFICE OF THE SHIP'S COMPANY—

... AND FRANKLY I SUSPECT BOTH DEATHS ARE MURDERS!

THE ANSWER MUST LIE IN THE LOG. CAPTAIN MOODY ALWAYS MADE CAREFUL ENTRIES! DO YOU SUSPECT ANYONE?

NOT YET, BUT GALLERY MANNED THE PUMPS! ALSO HE WANTED THE LOG! I THINK I'LL HAVE A TALK WITH HIM!

IF HE'S NOT ON THE SHIP, TRY THE "MARINER'S" HOTEL! HE STAYS THERE WHEN ASHORE!

I THINK I'LL TRY THE HOTEL FIRST! SOMETHING IN HIS ROOM MAY GIVE ME A CLUE!

MEANWHILE, ABOARD THE "SEA WITCH"—

NOTHING YET! I'LL LOOK AROUND THOSE PUMPS AGAIN BEFORE LEAVING!

HMM! WITH THIS LITTLE SWITCH ANYONE COULD CUT OFF THE AIR PUMPS, BUT ONLY NAMOR AND GALLERY WERE...

WELL, WELL! I SEE YOU'RE JUST AS NOSY AS YOUR BOY FRIEND!

GALLERY!!

YOU WERE AT THE PUMPS! YOU STOPPED THE AIR!

RIGHT! YOU MEDDLING FEMALE! BUT YOU'LL NEVER LIVE TO TELL IT!

LET ME DOWN!

QUIET! OR I'LL KILL YOU RIGHT NOW INSTEAD OF WAITING TILL WE GET OUT TO SEA!

LET ME OUT!

SCREAM YOUR HEAD OFF! NO ONE WILL HEAR YOU! AND AS SOON AS I COME BACK WITH MY GEAR, YOU'RE GOING ON A ONE WAY CRUISE!

AND AT THE MARINER'S HOTEL, IN GALLERY'S ROOM!

THE LOG BOOK! SO IT WAS GALLERY WHO SLUGGED ME! I'LL TAKE A LOOK THROUGH IT, AND...

WHA...?

PUT 'EM UP, NISE GUY! THIS TIME I'LL FIX YOU GOOD!

I SHOULDVE KNOWN YOU'D BE BACK FOR THE BOOK!

NOT THE WHOLE BOOK! JUST THIS PAGE! I— OH!

SURPRISED? NEXT TIME YOU LOCK A GIRL IN A CABIN, BE SURE YOU LOCK THE PORTHOLE, TOO!

GOOD WORK, BETTY! AND HERE'S FOR THE BUMP YOU GAVE ME AWHILE AGO!

THANKS, PAL, BUT YOU KEEP IT!

I'VE GOT THE GUN! HOLD HIM, NAMOR! HOLD HIM!!!

WOW! OOOH, NAMOR!

I'M SORRY, NAMOR! IS IT BAD?

NO, BUT IT GAVE HIM TIME TO GET AWAY! WHAT A HELP YOU ARE!

HE'LL GET HIM LATER, BUT HE MAY HAVE TIME TO HIDE THE PAGE HE TORE FROM THE BOOK!

LOOK, HARMON! CAPTAIN MOODY WROTE HEAVILY, AND THE MARKS SHOW THROUGH ON THE NEXT PAGE!

THIS WILL BRING OUT THE WRITING! IT'S A TRICK I LEARNED WHEN I WAS A GIRL SCOUT!

SMART GIRL!

THERE'S CAPTAIN MOODY'S LAST ENTRY!

ALL I SEE IS A FAINT SUSPICION OF GALLERY, AND THE POSITION OF BAILEY'S DEATH!

BUT THAT'S THE SAME POSITION WHERE THE "ALBATROSS" IS!

THE "ALBATROSS"! THE TREASURE SHIP!!

SURE! HE FOUND IT WHILE HE WAS DOWN! AND GALLERY COULDN'T RETURN TO IT WITHOUT THIS LOG!

HARMON! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

I'VE HEARD ENOUGH! GOT TO STOP THAT SHIP! S'LONG!

MOMENTS LATER.

GOT TO FIND GALLERY BEFORE THE SKIPPER LEAVES!

TAXI!

HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE AROUND! MAYBE HE'S ... HUH? BETTY!! HOW OH, HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

I TOOK A DIVE! YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME OUT OF THIS!

HEY! YOU TWO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE?

GET SET, BETTY! HERE IN FOR IT NOW!

DROP THAT, SISTER!

HEY! LET ME AT THAT WATER BOY! I'VE GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH HIM!

STEP RIGHT UP, GALLERY! YOU'RE NEXT!

DOES THIS HELP SETTLE THE SCORE?

OOH, NAMOR! LOOK OUT!!

BUT THE WARNING COMES TOO LATE!

HOURS LATER...

HEY! WE'RE MOVING! HOW LONG WAS I OUT?

THANK GOODNESS YOU'RE ALIVE! I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER COME TO!

I CAN'T BREAK THESE ROPES! I'VE BEEN WITHOUT WATER TOO LONG!

WAIT! I THINK I'VE GOT IT! IF I CAN ONLY KICK HARD ENOUGH!

HEY! THIS IS NO TIME TO PLAY GAMES!

THERE! NOW, YOU'LL SEE SOMETHING I LEARNED FROM A COOK BOOK!

WHA...?

A LITTLE BAKING SODA PLUS THE BRINE FROM THE PICKLES AND YOU GET YOUR WATER!!

AND AS THE MOISTURE REACHES SUB-MARINER, HIS STRENGTH RETURNS!

BETTY! YOU'RE A GENIUS!

TUT, TUT! THINK NOTHING OF IT! NOW HOW ABOUT HELPING ME OUT OF THESE ROPES?

THANKS! THOSE ROPES WERE TIGHT!

THE SHIP HAS STOPPED AND THEY HAVE A DIVER OVER THE SIDE!

FIRST I'LL TAKE A QUICK LOOK AT WHAT IS GOING ON DOWN THERE!

BETTY WAS RIGHT! THEY'RE COMING BACK WITH THE MORT!

WELL, WELL, MY OLD FRIEND, GALLERY! PLAYING WITH KNIVES, TOO!

WHAT TH...? SUB-MARINER!! I'LL JUST LET HIM GET A LITTLE CLOSER!

STOPPING AIR LINES WAS ORIGINALLY YOUR IDEA, MY FRIEND!

NO!! NO!!

NOW YOU'RE SHOWING SOME SENSE! TELL THEM TO PULL YOU UP!

HERE TOO BAD!

YOU POOR FISH, WAIT TILL MY BOYS GET YOU ON DECK!

TAKE CARE OF HIM, MEN! GALLERY'S COMING RIGHT UP!

OH, OH!! HERE WE GO AGAIN!

HAVEN'T I HIT YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE?

HEY! SAVE ONE FOR ME!

SWING HIM OVER SUB-MARINER! THAT WEIGHTED SUIT WILL CRUSH HIM!

SLEEP TIGHT, SAILOR BOY! OH, OH, MON WHAT?

OH, NO, YOU DON'T!!

UNH!

SORRY, NAMOR, BUT THE FUN'S OVER!

HUH?

THE SHIP RETURNS TO SHORE—

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE MY STORY IN PRINT! STILL THINK I'M A PEST, NAMOR?

HELL, NO! NEXT TIME I WORK ON A MURDER CASE, I MIGHT EVEN ASK YOU TO HELP ME!

THE END

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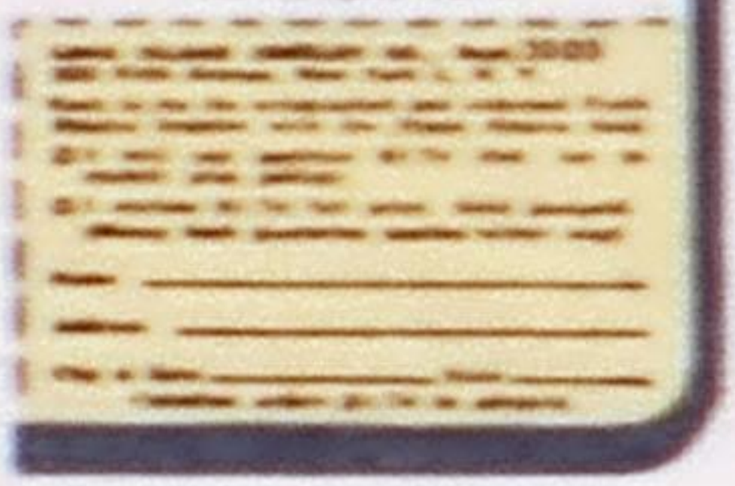

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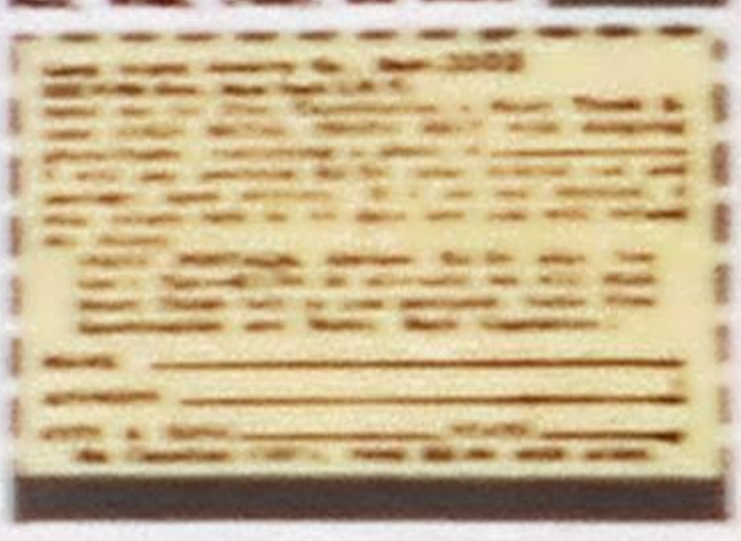

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